

**CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE PROTECTION  
GRANT PROGRAM**  
Question 1

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Question 1 Summary**

**Introduction**

The Conservation and Resource Protection Grant Program became known as the “Question 1 Program” when the Proposal to Issue Bonds for Conservation and Resource Protection under Assembly Bill No. 9 of the 17th Special Session appeared number 1 on the State of Nevada voter’s ballot. Nevada voters passed Question 1, thereby authorizing the State of Nevada to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$200 million

*“...to preserve water quality; protect open space, lakes, rivers, wetlands, and wildlife habitat; and restore and improve parks, recreational areas, and historic and cultural resources.”*

Of the total bond issue, funding allocations were made as follows:

1. \$27 million to the Nevada Division of State Parks for property acquisition or capital improvements and renovations;
2. \$27.5 million to the Nevada Department of Wildlife for property acquisition, facility development and renovation, or wildlife habitat improvements;
3. \$25 million to the Las Vegas Springs Preserve in Clark County for planning and developing the preserve, providing wildlife habitat, and constructing support facilities;
4. \$10 million to Clark County for development of a regional wetlands park at the Las Vegas Wash;
5. \$35 million to Nevada’s Department of Cultural Affairs to establish a museum at the Las Vegas Springs Preserve;
6. \$10 million to Washoe County for enhancement and restoration of the Truckee River corridor; and
7. \$65.5 million to the Nevada Division of State Lands to provide grants for state agencies, local governments, or qualifying private nonprofit organizations for various programs including recreational trails, urban parks, habitat conservation, open spaces, and general natural resource protection projects.

The Nevada Division of State Lands coordinates with the other divisions and departments as necessary to insure that Question 1 funding is optimally spent. Technical Advisory Groups and Coordination Committees are established to assist with project identification and ranking, and to maintain communication between divisions/departments to promote program success.

## **AB-9**

AB 9 (Which is also referred to as “Question 1”) was a landmark environmental initiative designed to benefit, protect, and preserve Nevada’s natural resources. It authorized the state to issue general obligation bonds up to \$200 million for natural resource projects.

Funds generated by the bond sales are used to conserve valuable environmental assets as well as support recreational and cultural facilities throughout Nevada. AB 9 provides a fiscally responsible mechanism for addressing the needs of environmental, historic, and cultural resources across the state.

### **AB 9 Highlights**

- Provides funds for development of habitat conservation and open space plans;
- Provides funds to protect drinking water supplies and enhance/restore river systems in Northern Nevada (Truckee and Carson Rivers) and Southern Nevada (Clark County Wetlands Park);
- Provides funds for development of the Las Vegas Springs Preserve and to establish a permanent state museum in Clark County; and
- Ensures the ability to leverage funds from other sources – helps recipients meet the matching requirements for federal/state/local grants as well as funds from public and private foundations.
- Requires almost half of the bond funds to be matched by recipients.

### **Program Workshops**

Once Question 1 passed, Nevada Division of State Lands staff was charged with developing regulations to implement the program. Twenty public workshops and two public hearings were held across the state to gather input and formulate the regulations. All meetings were noticed in compliance with open meeting laws. The resulting Question 1 Administrative Regulations implement the program in a consistent manner, and insure the intent of AB-9 is realized.

## **Program Objectives**

The premises of the Question 1 Program are explicit in the enabling legislation and Administrative Regulations. In addition, the Nevada Division of State Lands is committed to insuring that the State Lands Question 1 Program element, the distribution of \$65.5 million, is fair and equitable. Applicants are steered through the application process to make sure that their project meets the intent of the program, and that their applications can be fairly ranked. Unranked applicants are encouraged to apply during subsequent application acceptance periods.

State-wide representation is sought by Question 1 staff. All counties have been contacted and are encouraged to take advantage of the program. Funding is intentionally metered out over time to allow applicants with limited resources to apply for funding before it is completely obligated to applicants ready today.

Projects that leverage other funding sources and that are linked to past and future projects will rank higher by design, thereby stretching Question 1 dollars as far as possible, and maximizing the amount of public benefit achieved through the program.

Most importantly, it is the objective of the Nevada Division of State Lands to administer its portion of the Question 1 Program towards the protection of natural resources and to maximize their conservation first. In most cases, the public will benefit immensely over time if not immediately, by insuring that critical private and public natural resources are managed using the best tools known today, including conservation easements.

## **Funding Available, Funding Cycles**

The Nevada Division of State Lands administers \$65.5 million of the \$200 million tied to Question 1. During the first grant award round, \$6 million was made available; this amount was determined by proportioning out the dollars available evenly over time. Round 1 dollars needed could not be easily anticipated (\$29 million in requests were received.) State Lands Question 1 staff expect future funding round dollar amounts to increase, and then decrease towards the end of the program's lifetime.

It may be appropriate for some project proponents to work with the Division of State Parks, the Department of Wildlife, or Clark and Washoe Counties rather than State Lands to get their project funded by Question 1.

All Question 1 funds must be sold to projects by November 5, 2008. Some projects may continue to see reimbursements as late as 2011. All bond funds sold are to be expended within three years of issuance. For this reason, projects that are deemed ready to implement should rank higher to insure timely expenditure of funding.

**Question 1 Web Page**

For additional, up-to-date program information, the reader is advised to review the Question 1 Program web page that is linked to the Nevada Division of State Lands Home Page ([www.lands.nv.gov](http://www.lands.nv.gov).)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How much of the \$200 million of Question 1 funding is administered by the Nevada Division of State Lands?**

Only \$65.5 million of the \$200 million Question 1 appropriation is administered by the Nevada Division of State Lands. The \$65.5 million will be awarded to priority projects that have been ranked by the Program Administrator.

### **Is all of the \$65.5 million available now?**

No. Only a portion of the \$65.5 million administered by the Nevada Division of State Lands will be awarded to grantees at a time. During the first grant round, \$6 million was initially authorized for expenditure. The metering out of grant funding is intentional to allow time for those applicants with fewer resources to plan for projects and prepare applications to be submitted in future rounds.

### **If \$6 million is available during a given grant round, can I submit an application requesting \$6 million?**

Yes, but the odds of being granted the full amount are low. The total funding amount available during a given grant round is allocated to several project types described in Assembly Bill 9 and the Administrative Regulations. For example, during the first round, \$1.38 million of the \$6 million was allocated to Nonprofit Acquisitions of Land and Water. Question 1 is a state-wide program; allocation of all the funding available during a round to one project would be counter-productive to the objective of reaching all corners of the state.

### **Where can I find an application?**

Question 1 General Application Packets may be downloaded from the program's web page ([www.lands.nv.gov](http://www.lands.nv.gov). Click on "Question 1"), or requested from Question 1 staff. Application forms on the web page are word-fillable for your convenience. Electronic filing, however, is not available. The application must be printed out, original signatures must be obtained, and a hard copy submitted to the Nevada Division of State Lands. Please see the website or contact staff for the required number of application copies to be submitted. Please note that the Nevada Division of State Lands Question 1 General Application Packet is not the same as that used by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. The Nevada Division of State Lands Question 1 program operates under specific Administrative Regulations that differ from the Department.

Question 1 Administrative Regulations may be downloaded from the program's web page ([www.lands.nv.gov](http://www.lands.nv.gov). Click on "Question 1").

### **Where is the Nevada Division of State Lands Question 1 Office located?**

While the main Nevada Division of State Lands Offices are located at 333 W. Nye Lane, Room 118 in Carson City, Nevada, Question 1 Program staff are located in an annex building located at 333 S. Carson Meadows Drive, Suite 44, also in Carson City, Nevada. Road maps directing applicants to the Question 1 office can be found online using Mapquest.com or a similar mapping program.

Applicants driving to Carson City via US Highway 50 from the west should proceed north through Carson City and turn right (east) on East Fifth Street (At the Ormsby House Hotel Casino and Nevada State Legislature Building). Proceed east past Stewart and Roop to S. Carson Meadows Drive, and turn left. The office is located in the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Center Office-Warehouse facility on the right (East) just past the Laundry Lounge (Note the Interstate Batteries sign).

From US Highway 50 via Dayton, turn left (South) on Carson Street (US Highway 395) to Robinson Street (At the Nugget Casino) and turn left (East). Proceed past Stewart and Roop to S. Carson Meadows Drive, and turn right (South). The 5<sup>th</sup> Street Center is past the three-way stop and is located on the left, just before the Laundry Lounge on Fifth Street.

### **Who can apply for Question 1 funding?**

Assembly Bill 9, and the Nevada Division of State Lands Question 1 Administrative Regulations (which largely mirrors AB-9) indicate eligible funding recipients for several different project types. For example, only counties, municipalities, and state agencies within a county with a population less than 100,000 can apply for funding to pay for the preparation of Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs). Nonprofit organizations pursuing HCPs must obtain a sponsor (typically a county) to apply for funding.

Grants may be awarded to counties, municipalities, state agencies, and non-profit conservation organizations for the purpose of protecting, preserving, and obtaining the benefits of the property and natural resources of the State of Nevada. Because funding through this program is limited, allocation of these funds will be competitively determined.

### **Where can I find the Nevada Division of State Lands Question 1 Administrative Regulations?**

Question 1 Administrative Regulations may be downloaded from the program's web page ([www.lands.nv.gov](http://www.lands.nv.gov)). Click on "Question 1").

## Question 1 Program Steps

Question 1 Program Participants will move through several steps, from project conception to the award of grant funding if appropriate, and through to project implementation. The actual steps or Critical Task Pathway followed will be project dependant. The sequence of steps outlined below is anticipated for a project that includes construction activities. Acquisition of land and the granting of conservation easements will likely entail fewer tasks.

- 1. Project Ranking by Jurisdiction:** In some cases, a county, municipality, or other entity may propose several projects that may be eligible to be funded by a Question 1 grant. Many entities will have already ranked their projects pursuant to their specific ranking process prior to applying for Question 1 funds. Completion of this task will aid NDSL staff in ranking all complete applications received, but it is not a required task.
- 2. Pre-Application:** Pre-Applications may be submitted to the Nevada Division of State Lands which will be reviewed for eligibility prior to submittal of a complete General Application. Division staff will prepare a Notice of Initial Determination of Eligibility. Note that in some cases, a project may be eligible to receive funding, but may not rank high enough to receive funding during a specific application acceptance period (Grant Round).
- 3. Grant Announcement:** During each application acceptance period (Grant Round), an announcement will indicate the dates of application acceptance including a deadline for receiving applications. The announcement will include a total dollar amount expected to be awarded during the respective Grant Round.
- 4. General Application:** With or without the submittal of a Pre-Application, a Complete General Application must be submitted to Division staff.
- 5. Complete/Incomplete Applications:** Once received, all general applications will be reviewed for completeness, and either a Notice of Complete Application or a Notice of Incomplete Application/Request for Additional Information will be provided to the applicant. Once Division staff receives a complete application the proposal can be ranked.
- 6. Ranking Evaluation and Prioritization:** All complete applications received will be reviewed for eligibility (If not previously done) and ranked, and a Notice of Ranking and Determination of Eligibility will be provided to the applicant.
- 7. Award of Grant:** Applications that are eligible to receive funding and that rank a priority project will receive a grant award notice.
- 8. Funding Agreement or Independent Contract:** Depending upon the project type and/or grant recipient, Division staff will work with the applicant to negotiate and eventually execute a funding agreement or independent contract. The applicant is now a Grantee.

**9. Apply for an Advance:** In very limited cases, Grantees will be able to request an advance of grant funding. The most common project would entail acquisition of land or an interest in land. Most projects will be requesting reimbursements for expenditures incurred.

**10. Project Commencement:** The project will commence on the ground and begin to incur expenses in accordance with the approved budget found in the signed funding agreement or contract.

**11. Project Implementation Monitoring:** NDSL staff will monitor the project to insure compliance with the funding agreement or contract, and to provide program feedback.

**12. Reimbursement of Expenses Incurred:** The Grantee may apply for reimbursement on at most a quarterly basis.

**13. Submit an Annual Status Report:** The Grantee will update NDSL staff on project progress by submittal of at least one project Status Report. Projects with terms that extend beyond one year may be required to submit Annual or other Project Status Reports.

**14. Amendment of Funding Agreement or Contract:** In limited cases, the funding agreement or contract may require an amendment. The Division of State Lands is not obligated to amend agreements or contracts to authorize supplemental funding beyond the original approved project budget due to cost overruns, shortfalls, unforeseen circumstances, or any other reason.

**15. Project Completion:** The project will be completed pursuant to the original or amended funding agreement or independent contract work plan.

**16. Submit Final Reimbursement Requests and Final Project Status Report.** The Grantee, upon project completion, may make their final request for reimbursements and payout of any withholds. The Final Project Status Report will be required.

**17. Post Project Implementation Monitoring:** Projects may continue to be monitored for effectiveness and ongoing commitments, including but not limited to compliance with the operations and maintenance plans summary, and/or requirements of a conservation easement.

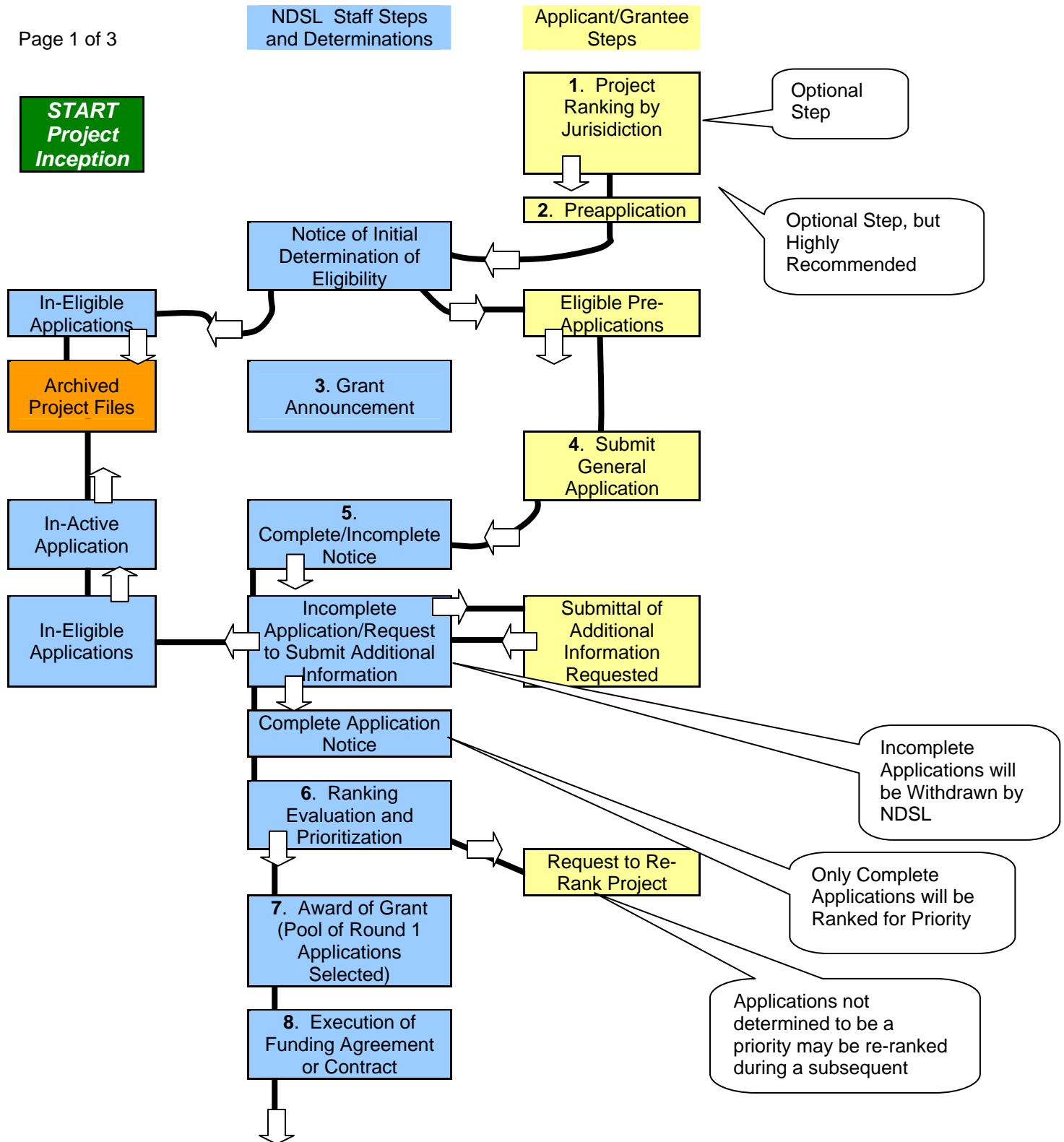
Additional unforeseen tasks may be required to obtain grant funding and implement a project. Project proponents should review the Question 1 General Application Packet, the Question 1 Administrative Regulations, and related Question 1 Program documents for additional information pertaining to the use of Question 1 grant funding.

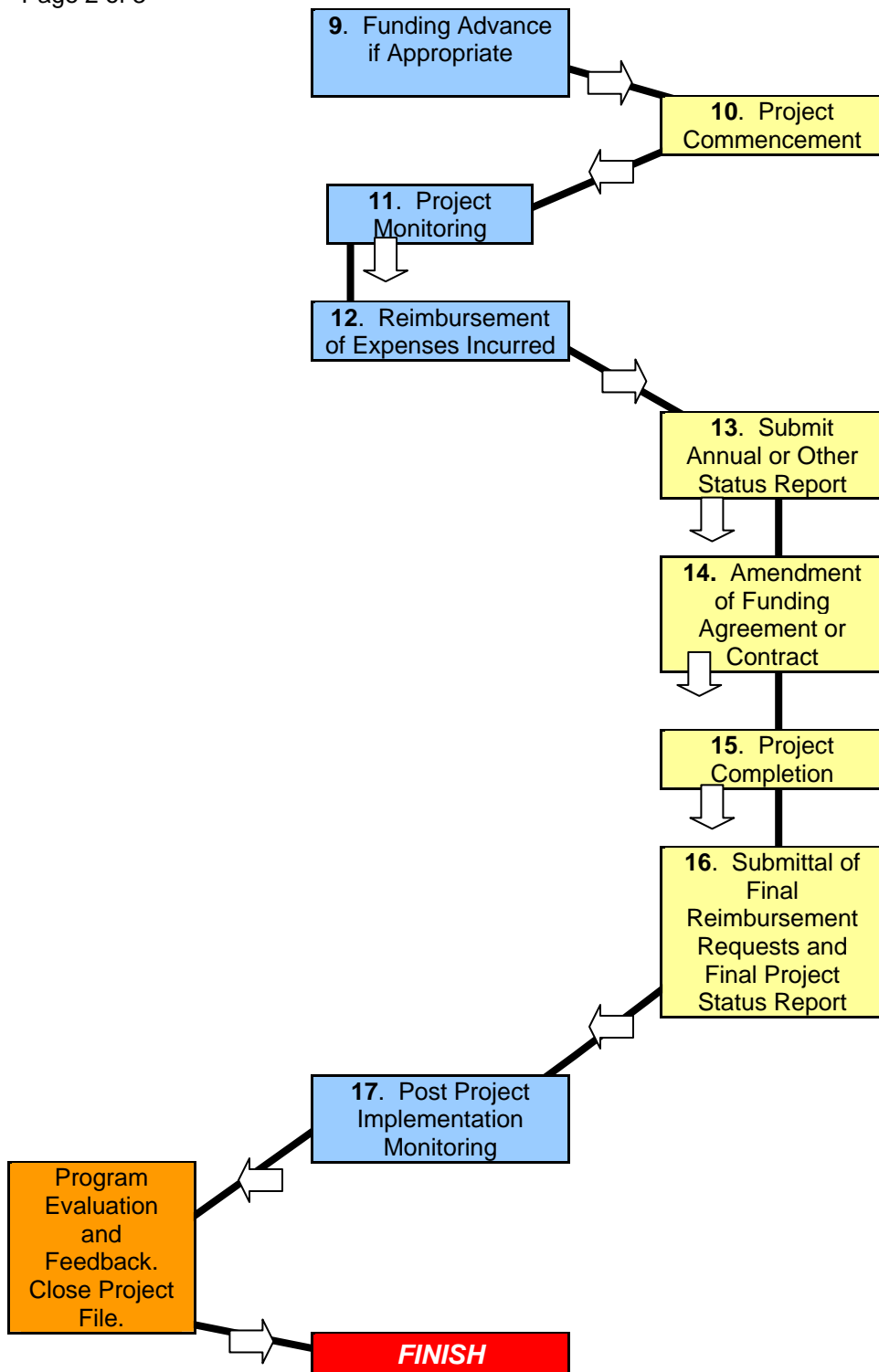


## Question 1 Program

### Program Steps Flow Chart

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Key:

Start of Process

Inactive, Closed, or Archived Project Files

NDSL Staff Process Step

Applicant/Grantee Process Step

End of Process

Call-Out for Additional Information